TENTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!

THE BARKS COLLECTOR™

100

1978 GWP

Holiday Greetings from Fred Milton Daan Jippes & The Barks Collector

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Frank R. Johnson

DOING IT THE BARKS WAY

FRED MILTON

((Introduction--Fred Milton is, along with Daan Jippes, a member of the team producing funny animal comics which are as good as any in the world today. They will be of special interest to our readers, since their stories deal with familiar characters, told in the Barks tradition.

The article you're about to read appeared first in slightly different form in the fine Danish fanzine Carl Barks & Co. #8. This is not just a translation, but an original draft written in English especially for The Barks Collector.

Readers would still enjoy seeing Carl Barks & Co., since it features many illustrations which we cannot print in the United States. Included are most of the finished art for the story, as well as rough and revised versions of the script, in English, so that you can actually read the story that's being talked about. There are numerous other illustrations by Milton, Jippes and other interesting Disney artists.

Inquiries about Carl Barks & Co., and letters of comment about this article may be sent to Pegasus, Randersvej 55, DK-8800 Viborg, Denmark.

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I was invited to write something about the details of producing the European funny animal comics nowadays. But instead of doing that, I'd rather comment on the making of just one of them. I guess this would fall in line with the approach of this magazine, as it represents an attempt in reviving the Barks tradition in storytelling. I don't know how comics work is normally carried out in the United States, and even for Europe this might be a somewhat special example, but may be of interest anyway.

The Idea:

The story was called "A Clean Case of Competence," and dealt with Donald Duck as an expert in handling difficult problems. Barks has made Donald an expert on several occasions; a prominent one was in the best selling WDC&S ever, September 1953, when Donald was a proficient rainmaker. You probably remember that Donald managed to make half raindrops on the fence around the field. Later, he managed a shop repairing things, in February 1954, and so on. But it was only in the late Fifties, I believe, the actual expert touch flourished. In March 1959 he was in the moving business, specializing in difficult jobs. In 1962 he was tearing down buildings--one of the peaks from this period.

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In the May, 1977 Dutch Donald Duck, more is told about Donald's problems in the cleaning business. The basic idea was inspired by the cartoon "Clock Cleaners" where Mickey, Goofy and Donald got entangled in the machinery of a clock-tower. As far as I know Barks never told about Donald's attempts to clean a clock-tower. But the vision of one small duck dwarfed by big machinery which he simply cannot overlook, has definite humorous possibilities as well as deep moral symbols. You might remember Charles Chaplin in a similar situation. So much for the idea.

Synopsis:
The next point was to build a dramatic sequence where Donald's problems with the clock-tower leads to a climax. Thinking in Barks' terms, you get the feeling that Donald probably could do with no less than efficiently spoiling the entire clock-tower. In this case the result would be bigger if the clock-tower were antique, and if the citizens of Duckburg really appreciated the old ticker. Hereafter it became natural to imagine Donald as a watch-maker. But if in the beginning of the story Donald was presented as an expert watch-maker, it might not seem logical if he should lose his touch all of a sudden when he came to the big machinery.

The solution might have worked out to satisfaction after all, but there might have been a danger of repetitive action by centering the whole story around watches. The problem of watches had to be analyzed thoroughly to create an interesting storyline with that theme.

We chose to keep up the 'clock cleaner' motive and work out way towards that by keeping Donald in the cleaning business. As the first demand is that the story should be entertaining all the way through, you cannot just present trivial cleaning problems. Donald can only get the chance to show his expertise by being confronted with difficult problems; queer situations with a tendency towards impossibility.

Forming the script:
After the action is thought out in general terms, the first attempts of making a script are carried out. Here you try to arrange the story in pictures. For a ten page story such as this one, about eighty pictures are needed. The story should flow naturally and smooth; and every picture should show a scene that can be presented clearly and visually, with as little dialogue as possible. Generally it is written straight ahead so that you have a feeling of development. You must have an inner picture of the frames in your mind.

Our cover montage features finished panels by Milton/Jippes. Corresponding pencil roughs above, and layouts and comprehensives which follow show how the artists develop their pages and the characters therein.

Usually you find that the number of frames or the break-down of pages does not quite fit the ten page formula, although the actual number of ten pages fits very nicely to a closely knitted humorous drama. So changes will have to be made. You also discover that things you need at an advanced point in the story actually ought to have been presented earlier, so you have to go back and introduce them. Or, you have taken in elements for the pure fun of it without them being necessary in carrying forth the story--then they might have to go.

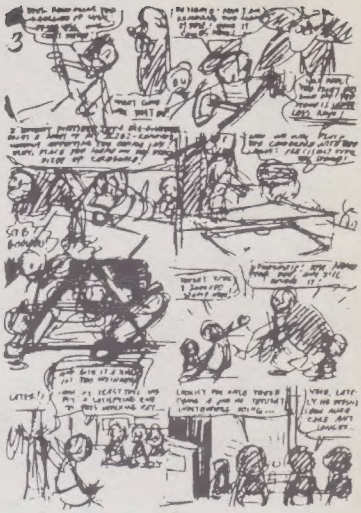
Every picture should carry on the story or present the characteristics of the personalities involved. Both things are very important, and there should be a natural balance between them. Of course, it is best if you can combine the two and let the characters present themselves and bring the story onwards at the same time. It is also preferable if local climaxes or gags could be placed efficiently on the layout of the pages so that you might have a cliff-hanger or a gag at the bottom of the page. The reader will turn the page with a smile, or he will do it very snappily to pass the cliff-hanger.

The Script:

The preliminary work on this particular story was done by me, and the final forming of the script in cooperation with Daan Jippes. We did the rest of the story together. We found that the Barksistic tradition of around 1948 would form the best visual basis for the execution. Donald should be the firm, self-assured egocentric type, with the kids around him playing the role of a Greek tragic chorus; commenting upon the action as it develops, showing a skeptic, resigned attitude towards the ways and byways of Fate.

Maintaining the Greek set-up, Donald should go beyond the human limits in committing 'hubris'--that is, to overestimate personal capacity. This was not difficult to combine with the Donald character.

Following that line, our story should be deeply moral (oh, yes!) and the equalizing justice 'Nemesis' should pop up in the end to set things right. Morally, that is. As for the rest, it could go under in the generally chaotic conditions which we had a feeling would reign in the end.

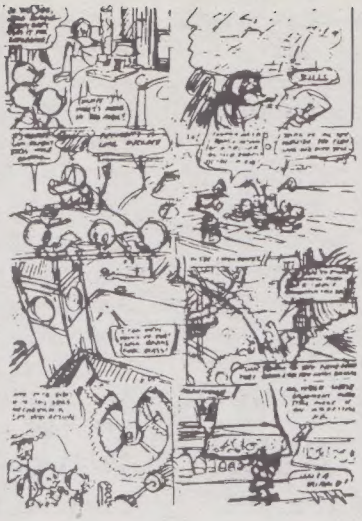


Thinking along those lines, it didn't seem like enough if Donald only spoiled some silly antique clockwork. That is, if it were only something material. It would be more effective if Donald, through his work with the clock could influence the whole Duckburg society in the direction of chaos. Taking in that idea, we settled upon using the fact that the clock tower would have four sides, and four dials. If Donald could make the four dials show different hours, the four parts of Duckburg watching the four different dials would get different notions of the time; something which could lead to fruitful misunderstandings.

Thus, it became important to show the tower as a king of 'Big Ben' caliber. Not just an old clockworks, but a ticker believed to be punctuality itself. Thereby we could add an extra moral: That one should never trust technical devices blindly, and that even the most trustworthy instruments can fail.

First we thought to show four examples, which demonstrated the lack of precision at different places. But this could be felt repetitious. It was improved insofar as it would come out stronger if the examples could be joined someplace in the story. Maybe that could be the actual climax, instead of the malfunction of the clock alone as thought out earlier. That led to the thought of using the transport system in the city. At different places transports could be set off, moving after schedules, and colliding in the end because the clock showed different hours.

Even if in this structure there can be observed principles from classical tragedies, the important thing is the charicature of things, situations and characters. Climax in our humorous tragedy had to have placable overtones. We decided to use two trains; one carrying confetti, the other loaded with molasses. To see wagons drowned in this mess would unfortunately only be half as fun as seeing people drenched in it, so from a third corner we decided to set a bus moving in on a collision course, in the rush hour traffic jam. Of course we must point out that all the people actually got away in time before the collision, but not more so that we could still have the pleasure of drenching them with molasses and confetti (ha ha).



Having settled upon this line of action, the problem arose to get room for all of this on ten pages. We knew that Barks could have done it, and even have room for a half page to show the climax of the story. So it evidently could be done.

We had to insert the presentation of the transports early in the story and then get back to them as the climax go got closer. One of the expert demonstrations of Donald Duck was omitted: the one where Donald was saving Banker Brokemans Gardenparty in the preliminary script. Evaluating it, it did in fact not develop the feeling of the Donald Duck expertise considerably. He had already, by restoring the stamp of Philo T. Ellic, shown that he managed to handle the most impossible cleaning problems.

To create a somewhat different picture from the one that Barks usually showed us in his 'expert stories,' we decided upon giving Donald artistic ambitions in his trade. It would then add to the humorous element of the story to contrast the rather dull routine of the cleaning job with the direct opposite attitude: The creative genius.

To let a cleaning man look upon his situation with the eyes of an artist--we felt this would be very proper for Donald Duck. The short scenes where he rejects trivial cleaning jobs would contrast the other performances. It would furthermore add to the humor to let him treat valuable things quite neglectingly and contemptously because they did not form a challenge to his creative talent. The scene with the stamp had to come quite close to the limits of his abilities, however, and where the other cleaning jobs were on a trivial level, the scene with the stamp had to be looked upon as convincing. It would also be the only place in the story where Donald actually got the chance of demonstrating that his talent was more than hot air and that he actually was skilled in his own right. Donald often plays the role of the clown, but he is not just a clown. We must feel some kind of sympathy and respect towards him; as a human being, so to speak.

The pure fact that the restoration of the stamp, from a totally realistic point of view, is impossible, means less. The scenes only have to work out realistically in the humorous context.

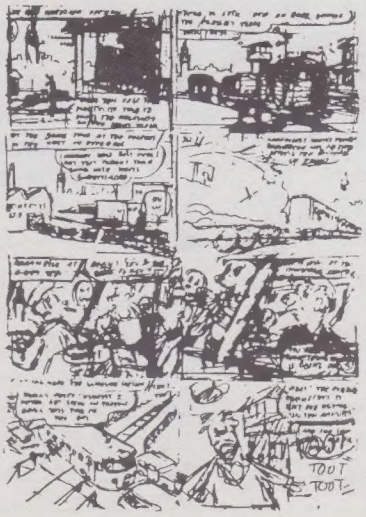
The nephews don't have many commentary remarks in the beginning. It only starts at the bottom of page three, where the short comments resume the basic situation Donald is in. At page four the nephews continue the role as commentators; as if the kids give their uncle the same examples of the meaning of the time-factor in the city, as presented to the reader in the panels. At the same time they work as arguments in talking Donald into accepting the dreary cleaning business.

That Donald by these reasons alone would accept the job would not seem reasonable, when we know of his artistic approach. We had to add some down to earth bills for his expert-equipment, so that he reluctantly accepts. This reluctance gets to be the core of his final failure, because he takes on the job with a casual attitude that the reader feels might prove disastrous in the end.

Since the central point of the story got moved from the clockwork to the mechanisms which the clockwork regulates, it was both natural and necessary to concentrate the action within the machinery of the clock. It was decided to use the clockwork to bring Donald's emotionally artistic mind off balance--make him lose his hat. Donald's beret actually came into the story at this point. At the same time as serving as his artist's insignia, it could be the center around Donald's genius; literally, if we imagine his genius within his head. So it would seem logical that he would lose his temper by losing his insignia of an artist, his beret, and suggesting that his genius actually is within his hat. This is an old trick of story-telling dating back to the fairytales.

Technically it is an advantage if you can combine an abstract thing like creative talent with a graphic symbol such as a hat. When Donald loses his hat, he is no longer acting as an expert, but as the old exploding duck. And when he gets his hat back, and theoretically could start acting sensible again, it is all too late.

The good advice from the kids considering the ways and means of cleaning the clock is of course neglected by Donald. As a creative genius he has his own sense of timing, which cannot be committed to the standard time-table



of the surrounding world. This, too, adds to the catastrophe, the collision between the rhythm of the individual human being and the rhythm of machines and time-tables from our technical society surrounding us.

Normally the individual has to submit to mass-conformism. So has Donald, but being highly individualized as he is, it's certainly not happening without complications, mostly for his surroundings. The concluding panels enlarge the perspective. The introductory text is repeated, and the illusion of a comic is brought at a distance by the nephews commenting the contents of the box.

We decided that it would be too easy a way out to let the ducks run out of the city in the last panel, a solution which Barks used very often. It would form a stronger moral more in line with today's society of obligation to let Donald clean the mess himself. But it could be done in many ways. He could mumble and grumble, indicating that Donald had learnt nothing, and that he would be ready to start all over again and make the same mistakes. We finally decided to let him carry out his work without comments, but with an expression that could be judged both as ordinary weariness or as resignment; and then let the reader herself think what she prefers to imagine: if Donald really has learnt his lesson, or if he is still the same old duck as before. Some anarchists would probably prefer the last alternative.

Layout:

When the script was ready, the layout of the pages started. This work deals with the arranging of the different pictorial elements on the page and within the single panels. The pages must form a balance; that is, so that each page becomes a unity in balance.

The characters must be placed in logical positions; the positions which make it easy to read the expression and situation which the panel in question should should communicate. The bubble must be placed so that it does not attract too much attention, and so that it helps in reading the information in the panel in the correct order.

Barks was an expert at this, and he was very economical. There was never more in his pictures than there was needed, and nothing distracted the mind from the essential message carried by the panel.

Reading the bubbles in the right order was also a problem in our story. On page six a bubble reaches down to cover part of the sign 'Main Spring--Keep Out,' indicating that Donald is ignoring the sign. If a bubble reaches over another, it shows in which order to read the text, or it indicates the importance of the dialogue. The bubble is often put to the corner or border of the panel, reducing the actual size of the panel. Here we experimented with leaving parts of the picture all around several bubbles, suggesting frames of maximum size.

Sounds form problems of their own. The sound of the bell had to be the dominating part of that panel. And what sound to use when four barrels of molasses collide with a bus and two loads of confetti?

In the story there are a number of silhouettes. They are used not only to create variety and to increase the mass of black on the page. More important, it is the wish for stressing a certain mood in the story. The nephews naturally have to be silhouetted against the setting sun at the bottom of page three, but at the same time they express the sad mood connected to the difficulty for creative talents to express themselves in our commercial society. Everybody can read it as they prefer.

The silhouette of the train on page eight should create a sinister feeling that it is on its way down towards catastrophe. The black switch-tower at the last panel of page eight indicates several things. First, the 'reading' indicates that we are back at the station. Then we see a person, presumably the stationmaster. Then we realize that he is not in the tower where we saw him before. He cannot get back and switch the tracks in time! The catastrophe cannot be avoided. The tower is all black.

By the way, the treatment of shadows all through the story is strictly logical. By noticing the shadows you can see in which part of the city you are, and in which direction the action moves. In the morning the sun is in the east, therefore shadows are on the west side where the factory lies. In the afternoon the sun is in the west and lights the front of the factory, so we can see that it is a confetti factory.

That was not revealed earlier, because of the shadow on the wall. Of course, the more obvious reason was that we

did not want to disclose that it was confetti and molasses we had on the tracks. If we had shown that at an early stage, there would be no question in the minds of the readers that these elements were to be combined in the end. The reader is allowed to feel what is going to happen in a humor strip, but it is a good idea to leave him in doubt in the beginning.

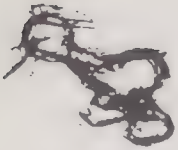
The question of exteriors and interiors in the comic formed special problems. At home in the 'studio' it was decided to increase the humorous elements in the surroundings by letting Donald stand on a stool to reach the table. When one nephew is sent off after cardboard, he fetches extra large pieces of course, and this called for a wringer of the bigger kind.

Furthermore we wanted to maintain the connection to ordinary cleaning tools. The old vase gets a shoeshine, the ill smelling saga is dropped into the washing machine, the stamp is run through a wringer, and the typewriter is chopped free. All are processes who whose humorous value lies in the mal-proportions between value, quality and refinement on one side; and routine, triviality and roughness on the other.

The clock-tower formed a question of its own. It's tempting to fill it with cogwheels and levers, but the Barks tradition demanded simplicity. Therefore we only showed a larger part of the machinery from the interior of the clock on the first panel. As the temptation of drawing the ducks extra small was too much for us, the tower came to look gigantic in comparison.

So the task of cleaning it became really a burden in our minds. Shortening the scene in the clock decided the placing of important parts.

First we see Donald at the bells. We immediately see that he is on a level above the kids (6,1). He does not want to hear their good advice, so he shouts down to the nephews (6,2) who answer upwards (6,3). Panel four must simply show the dial from the outside in a close-up, so that the reader gets the hunch that the bell will be ringing for our Donald very soon when he says, "Shut up, I won't hear anything more!" The bubble must reach down over the dial, so there is no question as to what the reader is supposed to notice in the panel. In panel five the big BOOONG must dominate.



This cross-clipping creates variety on the page. In panel six Donald is down among the kids, so he must have fallen down. In panel seven the mainspring is coming in, and panel eight shows us the general setting of the scene: That Donald must have lost his hat and that it is stuck in the mainspring. There simply was no time to show Donald falling, we discovered.

We discussed if the spring was to have a horizontal position as in Clock Cleaners, or vertical. The decision was to use a vertical solution, so we could display Donald's difficulty getting his beret back in a more visually exciting way, and because the treatment with the broom would more easily make it jump out of position if it was placed vertically. As it were, no big explanation was needed; the panels showed it all. Of course, it enlarges the humoristic realism to have a spring wound clock in the tower. We naturally placed a key in the center, much like the keys that kids know well from their playthings, but please don't ask who's winding the clock!

Animation:

The next step is to model the expressions on the characters and give them the most effective twist of their position. The primieval Donaldism was used as a guideline for the visualization. Had Donald worn his jacket, it would have had four buttons. We admit that the stamp collector Philo T. Ellic was brought in from "The Gilded Man" (FC#22), although in our version he is not quite so absent-minded.

As for the duck, we have here a version who is not yet stressed by the burdens placed upon him by society. Donald is still the individual with a high degree of personal integrity. Therefore he reacts with annoyance to the pressure put upon him from his surroundings. He's pushing the kids around after his whims, and they are reacting and carrying out his orders with an expression of skepticism and pity. 'Donald is the expert . . . but let's see now . . . let's just see now.'

As with Barks, it is impossible to follow a model sheet strictly. At every occasion a new expression will have to be dreamt up to fill the need.

Daan Jippes has a sensitivity for these things. If I have done most of the layout and inking, it is his efforts which have given the characters their liveliness and expressiveness that fit each given situation.

Finding the final attitude and expression takes up sketchwork as time consuming as the rest of the work on the comic put together. For the more difficult poses three or four sketches are not unusual; and as some illustrations might show, the drawings are very rough in the beginning. These roughs are done on separate pieces of tracing paper, and when the final solution is found it is taken to the actual drawing paper. Then it is cleaned with a hard pencil line before the inking.

We realized that we probably had to pour more time into the production than Barks might have had to do on his stories. The style was his, and consequently was flowing naturally for him; while we had to stress ourselves considerably to reach something that, to the best of our ability, fell in line with the tradition that he formed.

THEM SINGLE FELLERS HAVE ALL THE FUN!
FINNS HOLD DONALD DUCK ON MORALS CHARGE!
ILLICIT NO-PANTS RELATIONSHIP WITH DAISY
ILLEGITIMATE NEPHEWS CITED
LOS ANGELES TIMES SYNDICATE
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JIM KORKIS

THE DISNEY FANZINES

Carl Barks has received public recognition for his contributions to the Disney mythos. His name appears in the hardcover Disneyana by Cecil Munsey, as well as the softcover series The Best of Walt Disney Comics published by Gold Key. Even casual duck readers are becoming familiar with the name of the 'good duck artist' while the identities of other talented Disney artists still remain shrouded in anonymity.

This recognition is the direct result of fan articles on Carl Barks that have been appearing in fanzines for the past decade. Relatively recent articles such as E.B.Boatner's very fine pieces in Mediascene #25 and the Overstreet Price Guide #7 may owe their existence to the hard fought research efforts of a handful of fans who tried to uncover as much as possible about Carl Barks when it was not as popular to do so.

Certainly the most impressive of the Disney oriented fanzines is Michael Barrier's Funnyworld. The first issue appeared in October 1966 as an apazine contribution to Kapa-Alpha. Barrier's work was characterized by an earnest desire to expand the scholarship in the field of animation and funny animals. Issue #6 featured the first draft of "The Lord of Quackly Hall,"

which was a highly detailed exploration of Barks' work and served as the basis for Barrier's later essay, "The Duck Man," which was featured in Don Thompson and Dick Lupoff's The Comic Book Book. This book was dedicated to Carl Barks. Issue #7 featured the first installment of the Barks Bibliography, and issue #10 was the first issue to receive general circulation outside the apa. These early issues were done in mimeograph. Issue #12 was the first offset issue and the rest is history.

Funnyworld started to gain wide recognition and has become the hallmark by which other Disney fanzines are judged. Barrier's enthusiasm and scholarship are only exceeded by the care that goes into each issue. Still being published, Funnyworld always has something of interest to add to the appreciation of Barks' work, like the feature on unpublished Barks' work that appeared in issue #16.

One of the scarcest 'zines to locate is Comic Art #7 published by Don and Maggie Thompson in 1968. This mimeographed 'zine featured a self-portrait by Carl Barks, as well as the first published interview with the artist by Malcolm Willits, which was recorded in 1962 and supplemented by later correspondence. There is also a brief bibliography of Barks, and the revised draft of "The Lord of Quackly Hall" by Barrier. This fanzine is so scarce that even though it once sold for fifty cents, it was recently offered for sale for twenty five dollars, which may give some indication of how highly the material on Barks is prized by some fans.

March 1969 saw the appearance of the first issue of Disneydom, an offset 'zine published by Dan McAvoy. Besides featuring Richard Striner's article on 'The World of Carl Barks' which emphasized Barks' optimism, the 'zine covered many areas related to Disney. Dan quickly ran into legal trouble with the Disney organization, who claimed he had infringed on copyrights by using the name Disney. Dan explained the nature of fandom to the Disney attorney and was finally allowed to continue publishing if he changed the name of the fanzine.

A Fanzine (devoted to the work of Walt Disney) was the new title and issue #2 appeared in October 1969. Besides the Disney articles and reviews, there were two interesting studies of the Duck Family Tree based on the work of Carl Barks.

A third issue was definitely planned, as Dan had accepted two articles from me and assured me in writing that both articles had been set up in type and issue #3 was almost ready to go. No third issue appeared and like so many other fanzines, it disappeared with its editor. It was a popular fanzine and the first issue was reprinted at the same time that the second was released because demand was so great.

Another offset Disney fanzine of interest was Vacation in Duckburg published by Dan Lewonczyk. The first issue appeared in January 1971 and was devoted to the work of Walt Disney. The first issue showcased Dave Gulliksen's 'A Look at Carl Barks' Artwork' and a Carl Barks quiz. The second issue in April 1971 featured the second part of Gulliksen's article (which was later reprinted in The Barks Collector #6) as well as several checklists. Once again a third issue was planned but did not appear.

The program book for the 1973 Berkeley Convention featured a short article on Carl Barks by Don Ault and reproduced some of Barks' non-Disney work from the 1930's. The Newcon program book for 1976 showcased a very good Barks interview and its cover sported the oft-reprinted photo of Barks laughing at Howard the Duck. The San Diego Con program books always seem to feature a small cartoon by Barks, and of course, practically every issue of Russ Cochran's Graphic Gallery either reproduces a Barks painting or offers some of his duck work for sale.

There have been many miscellaneous articles on Barks' work including E.B.Boatner's highly illustrated piece for the May 1975 issue of Harvard Magazine. The twenty-fifth issue of Bill Wilson's The Collector has a nice Barks essay by Dwight Decker and the second issue of Fandom Annual reprinted an earlier fanzine article entitled 'What Has Happened to Disney's Comics?' by Dick West which makes considerable mention of Barks' fine work on the ducks.

There have been several recent Disney oriented fanzines including John Nichols' and Thomas Gibson's The Barks Collector which first appeared in August 1976 and has continued to be published on a regular schedule as well as constantly improving both in appearance and content.

Paul Anderson III has started The Duckburg Times, another 'zine dedicated to the works of Walt Disney. The first issue appeared in December 1977, and since that time Paul has published three other issues. His current schedule of an issue every three weeks makes Paul's one of the most frequent special interest 'zines, and certainly the most often published Disney oriented fanzine. You can send 75¢ for a sample copy, or $3.75 for a six issue subscription to Paul Anderson III, 1407 Spring Creek, Laramie, Wyoming, 82070.

There are a host of foreign publications relating to Barks that rarely appear in this country. The very interesting fanzine Carl Barks & Co. often features many original Barks illustrations.

There are many commentaries on Barks' work in the fan press that do not receive general distribution. Kim Weston publishes an apazine for Kapa-Alpha entitled 'Marking' that has provided a great deal of information on Barks. Kim is an outstanding and sensitive writer himself, although he often devotes space to other interesting fan projects like Walt Simonson's homages to Barks, Mark Worden's exploration of Donald Duck's roots, and Jack Chalker's 'An Informal Biography of Scrooge McDuck,' which later received a limited edition printing from Mirage Press.

Without a doubt, Carl Barks is an artist who deserves recognition, and it was the hard work of fans that finally tore away the veil of mystery that hid this fine artist for so many years. Barks' world is so rich with life that even after a decade of fan articles, most fans feel that we are only beginning to understand and appreciate Barks' work. The next decade may produce some of the most interesting work ever.

Literary Elements In Bark's Stories

John Nichols

Reading the stories done by Barks leaves you with the impression that even if there were no art at all in them, they would still be worth reading just for the sake of their appeal as good stories. That is, although the art certainly enhances the beauty of the story and would seem to be all-important, Barks' stories seldom declined to the low point of some current comics, which rely on gimmicky and flashy art, but are completely lacking in a strong story line. Just pick up a recent superhero comic and try to imagine the task of writing the story in prose, with no art, and making it readable.

We shall consider several areas in which Barks excelled in comics. And although it may seem artificial to isolate the narrative from the art, the purpose of this article is to show that these literary elements were independent of the artwork. Barks' stories would have been great stories even without the art. We have forgotten, with the juxtaposition of "Barks" and "art" into a trite phrase among collectors, that art alone does not make a classic. Barks certainly had the art, but there were other elements also that made him the Duck genius.

First let us consider Barks' use of hyperbole. The Paul Bunyan stories relied heavily on it. Remember how the loggers ate hotcakes from a skillet so big that to grease it they had men tie fat meat on their shoes and skate around it? Barks' use of hyperbole is similar to the old folklore; but he never relied solely on this one element, as did the Paul Bunyan tales.

Hyperbole abounds in Barks. Scrooge's money bin, the Junior Woodchuck Guidebook, Gladstone's luck, and Scrooge's phenomenal greed are all examples of exaggeration for effect. But other, more specific cases come to mind.

The unwinding of the ball of string across Africa in Scrooge #15, and the statue building contest between Scrooge and the Maharaja of Howduyustan in WDC&S 138, illustrate Barks' ability in using hyperbole. Almost any example of Gladstone's luck, such as in A Christmas for Shacktown, is hyperbolic as well. But my own favorite example is certainly "The Fabulous Tycoon" in US #23. Nearly every frame is a preposterous exaggeration, all beautifully done. And what of the delightful frame in which the Texan brags that if he moved all his cattle at once, London would have to turn its lights on!

Contrasting this story with "The 24 Carat Moon" in US #24, though, we see that the Texan story is much shallower, since it relies solely on exaggeration for effect. In the moon story, the hyperbole is merely the fact that the moon is solid gold. Other elements make this story into a well-rounded tale.

A second non-art element contributing to Barks' greatness is the depth of his characters. Duck fans who also read superhero comics may find a parallel between Kirby's character delineations of the early 1960's, and Barks' characters from the 1940's on. Superhero fans like to point out that Marvel's universe included caped heroes who were believable except for their super powers. They point to this believability as a milestone in comics. But duck fans have always enjoyed the same convincing character portrayals in the Barks stories.

This depth of character is much more impressive than Barks' handling of hyperbole. Consider Gladstone, who Barks himself said was hard to do and could never have his own comic due to his one-sided nature. The character of Gladstone, although it remains hollow by comparison to the other ducks, is given as much depth as possible. We see him as a potential lover (WDC&S 156), as a greedy braggart (WDC&S 88, the origin of Gladstone), and even as someone willing to pitch in for a good cause (A Christmas for Shacktown).

Gus Goose likewise has limitations; he is mainly a brawn, no brains farmhand. But his trip to the Dream Planet rounds out his character somewhat. We see him in another environment. He's off the farm and more greedy than lazy.

Barks' greatest success in believability of characters was with Donald. One way to summarize the duck's depth of character is to say that almost anything that you can say about Donald is true. He can't just be neatly classified as anything specifically, but rather has a smattering of many diverse traits. Donald is truly "Everyduck." He is greedy (FC 367), compassionate (all the Firestones), daring and defiant (WDC&S 159), irresponsible (FC 318), talented at many jobs (WDC&S 156) and just about anything else you could think of. The depth of Donald's character dwarfs any superhero. The same can be said for his nephews. They run the gamut of emotions and actions.

Scrooge himself is quite well-rounded. His coming of age can be seen by comparing his debut in FC 178 with his nature in US #22, "The Golden River." In this latter story Scrooge ceases to be strictly a money-grabber. We can also cite US #2, where he lets Goldie find the gold which he could have had himself. In this story, though, Scrooge sees fit to disguise his kindness, so that no one will think he's getting soft. Scrooge #22 seems to be the pivotal point in his development when he openly admits that there are things more important than money.

A third point to be made about Barks' stories is their themes have staying power. Barks wrote about things that have been and will continue to be interesting to us as humans; jealousy, greed, love, pride, etc. Often it seems that the stories have a more limited and topical theme, but closer examination reveals that they really speak of things more important and universal than is first apparent.

In "The Golden Helmet" Barks' theme is the Quest of the Hero. As in other longer stories, such as US #11, the theme has shades of Don Quixote, and of the Quest for the Grail. In FC 189 the theme is the salvaging of the family fortune, and the duck family closes ranks to achieve this.

Another universal theme found in Barks' works is conflict; between Donald and his nephews, as well as between Scrooge and everyone else. In WDC&S 148 we see Scrooge being tricked by Donald into buying him a free dinner. We can all identify with the desire to get something for nothing. And US #6, where Scrooge goes off to find the ideal, moneyless society, speaks to us all of a utopian desire to find a better life somewhere. This universality of themes is why, it seems, Barks' stories are being read today, and other comics are doomed to the obscurity of the seldom-fingered pages of the price guides.

Another literary merit found in Barks is his handling of motifs; elements that make up a story. A tight story will have few motifs introduced which do not play some role in the development of the story. This is especially critical in comics, given the inherently limited space there. Obviously, if extraneous elements are continually introduced, this wastes valuable space as well as detracting from the appeal of a tightly woven story.

This is not to say that every element introduced into the story must be instrumental to the unravelling of the plot. There are many non-essential motifs in the stories, which could be left out without ruining the story. They serve mainly as landscaping, and might help by livening an otherwise slow story line. These "free motifs" cannot be allowed to dominate, though, since the story would thereby be weakened.

A good example of tightness of plot achieved by control of motifs is Walt Disney's Christmas in Disneyland's "Pearls of Tabu Yama." All the elements introduced into the story are necessary to the story's conclusion. The mysterious box on board, the eruption of the volcano, the pearls, the palm fronds, reef, and the volcanic ash are some of these motifs. They are all crucial to the denouement of the story. This is one of the tightest knit stories Barks ever did.

Another beautiful instance of Barks' tidiness with motifs is to be found in Christmas Parade #9, "Christmas in Duckburg." The kids' ferris wheel, the moose mixup, and the twenty feet stolen from the Christmas tree are wonderfully tied together in the splash frame on the last page of the story. This is economy of motifs at its best. Other Barks stories exhibit this same conciseness. This produces stories with few loose ends.

End Part One.

THE BARKS COLLECTOR

PUBLISHER: JOHN NICHOLS
EDITOR: THOMAS GIBSON

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The illustration on p. 13 reprinted from The Virginian Pilot; Feb. 28, 1978.

Press run 1000. Printing 1 2 3 4 5

No More Ducks

Editorial

There are several things for which we would like to offer the readers our apologies. Some of these circumstances were partially or all our fault; others were beyond our influence. The net result is that this issue of TBC has been delayed substantially. Working with a slightly less ambitious schedule, and having time to build up a small file of material ahead of time, we are confident that we will keep to a regular schedule for 1979.

The event causing the major part of the delay, and responsible also for the drastic change in appearance, was the notice we received from the Walt Disney Productions' lawyers in July. The sum of their letter was that since our reproductions of their characters was unauthorized (which we were unaware of) we could no longer print any illustrations of these or any other characters on which Disney Productions owns a copyright.

There is only one meaning this can have: The Barks Collector is not likely, for a long time at least and possibly never, to print illustrations of Daisy, Donald, Scrooge or other members of the Barks Duck Family. That we could find some legal loophole is unlikely. Reinforcing the copyright statutes is the Trademark held on the various characters, which essentially allows them to control all promotional use of these characters, no matter who the artist. Also, it is unlikely that WDP will grant permission any time soon, as their history has been one of denying authorization to fandom.

This won't mean any permanent problems to our schedule. It did hold up this issue, since all the material originally intended for #10 was illustrated. What we did was to use the articles coming in for the next issue. The articles that were to be in #10 will now appear in #11 and other future issues.

Immediately after we got this sorted out, John had to enter a hospital for extended treatment. However, at any point it looked like he might be out in a short time, so there seemed little to do other than wait. By the time things were well and the issue prepared it was December, so the obvious choice was to send this out over the holidays and start fresh in '79.

The disheartening side of this is not the delay, but the permanent absence from our pages (in illustrated form) of the characters this magazine is devoted to. It is disillusioning of the Disney image to deny permission to a magazine of scholarly criticism, in the light of the many juvenile representations and other less honorable but more profitable enterprises to which the rights are licensed. Disney's position is contrary to precedent set by other comic publishers, who encourage their readers to do their own renditions of their characters, to the extent of publishing these drawings in the comics themselves, and company sponsored fan magazines. Many of today's finest comic artists developed their abilities and came to be noticed by way of the various fan publications, which are also responsible for the popularization and subsequent reprinting of many of the older comics.

This move by Disney is deplorable since they have many times turned to the unauthorized reproduction market for a source of profit. They encourage this among many manufacturers by licensing the more successful of the illegal imitations (see the list of 'Ten Most Popular Disney Fakes' printed this year in The Buyer's Guide.) Unfortunately our magazine offers no such profit potential, so it isn't worth their effort to license us; especially when we're as likely to level criticism at them as well as praise.

The approach of many publishers today is to exploit creative talent for the greatest possible gain, at the least possible expense. That is, you pay the artist as little as you can, and to do this you must give him as little credit as possible. The current Disney attitude seems to be that any accomplishments stem from something being a Disney production, and individual achievement is not recognized under this system. The acknowledgement in recent reprint volumes that Carl Barks wrote and drew many Donald Duck stories, and so might be responsible for some of his popularity, can be seen only as a late, begrudging admission. Hopefully it will protect WDP from image damagine suites such as the one brought against Warner Communications by the creators of Superman.

In the meantime, comics continue to be published at a minimal profit, the artists many times receiving little or nothing. It is unlikely that any Donald Duck artists (or Superman or Spiderman artists for that matter) are receiving a share of the immense profits from Donald Duck soft drinks, or the many toys being sold this year. It could be factors like this which lead to a situation whereby a publisher must censor its fans because amateur artists are able to draw better than their own.

The Barks Collector will continue to publish, and hope that future Disney decision makers will take a more benevolent stand. We also wait for a time when the congressional lobbies of the publishing conglomerates are not so influential; and the courts recognize that when a character becomes as popular as Donald Duck he is a national hero not to be regulated by private interests.

THOMAS GIBSON

We hope, after the wait, that you're pleased. With much of the art no longer available, we sought for conciseness and a tighter appearance. By eliminating non-essentials, our intent was to fill this issue with as much top quality material as possible. Next issue features another article about the popular European scene, by Swedish expert HORST SCHRODER. We're especially happy to have this, in light of the great response to Horst's last effort in #7. TBC is becoming known in Europe also, largely due to distribution by RUNEPRESS.

We thank everyone who has written, for all the positive comments. Scarcely a letter comes in not praising HIGS, undoubtedly our most popular artist. We hope to have him back soon. Also RON EVRY, a TBC regular to whom we extend Get Well wishes. Thanks to DON CORAY for the fine illustrations on pp. 4 & 15 of last issue. Due to a mix-up in the envelopes we weren't sure who to credit at the time; but thanks, Don, they were among the finest we've published.

WALT DISNEY'S COMICS & STORIES

REPRINT CHECKLIST

ABBREVIATIONS: D&D - Daisy and Donald
CD - Walt Disney's Comic Digest
DDBP - Donald Duck's Beach Party
HDL - Huey, Dewey and Louie
US&M - Uncle Scrooge and His Money
DDD - Daisy Duck's Diary
DD - Donald Duck
GDFF - Granma Duck's Farm Friends
US - Uncle Scrooge

Orig/Rep		63	304	99		134		170	CD29
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I trade against Barks in NM; strictly graded, white pages all around, no inked borders. Early major Marvel titles in VF/NM; Spiderman, Fantastic Four, etc. Police, Plastic Man, Spirit (Quality) + Sections (16 pp w/Lady Luck or Tabs only) from decent fair on up (no brittleness condoned).

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34 nmt.....$16
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45 vg-fn $8
47 vfn pencil on cover..... $7
47 mt.....$18
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51 vfn ½"tear on cover $8
51 nmt.....$15
52 gd minus... $3

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52 VG $6
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58 fn $10
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60 vfn crease on cover $10
61 vfn $11
62 gd $4
62 vfn $11
63 fa-g $3
63 vg $5
63 fn-vfn $10
64 fn $9
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64 nmt sub copy $10
65 gd minus $3
65 vfn# on cvr.. $9
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67 fn $4
68 vg $5
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Folks, I need a copy of that classic Barks story, LOST IN THE ANDES, FOUR-COLOR #223. As a collector, I have searched right and left for this book without success. So . . . hopefully my search is over, because if the readers of TBC can't help me, I think I may be in for some trouble! I need one copy in Very Fine or better condition. I will pay 100% of Overstreet for this book. If you have a copy of this great comic that you would like to sell, please drop me a line.

With Appreciation,

Mark

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THOMAS GIBSON, P O BOX 12355, NORFOLK, VIRGINIA, 23502

Thanks to all who've ordered from past ads, and also to those of you I have seen at conventions as well. Due to unprecedented demand, all material from my last ad is totally SOLD OUT. I hope to have more choice Carl Barks and Walt Kelly comics for sale this winter. In the meantime, though, I would like to offer a small but desirable selection of reprints--and also my best wishes to all of you for the coming year.

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